

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1922

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 14, 2004

The Senate Judiciary Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1922.

This bill would establish the Office of Counter-Terrorism in but not of the Department of Law and Public Safety. The office already exists pursuant to Executive Order No. 33, issued by Governor James McGreevey on October 3, 2002, however this legislation would codify the office in statute in recognition of the need for the office to be a more permanent feature of government, and would also enhance the existing mission and authority of the office.

The office would be supervised by a director, who would be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Director of the Office of Counter-Terrorism would be required to possess the necessary security clearance to access intelligence information under federal law, or be qualified to obtain such clearance. The director would report to the Attorney General on matters relating to the enforcement and prosecution of criminal business in the State and to the Governor on all matters relating to homeland security.

The office would be organized by the director, and could include administration, intelligence, operations, critical infrastructure, investigation, policy, and legal and regulatory functions. The director would be authorized to name assistant and deputy directors as deemed necessary to help carry out these functions.

The duties and responsibilities of the Office of Counter-Terrorism in brief include:

- (1) To oversee, direct and coordinate all counter-terrorism activities by State, county and municipal law enforcement agencies;
- (2) To identify, deter and detect threats of terrorism against New Jersey;
- (3) To track leads, gather intelligence, conduct investigations, or take any other appropriate action against any domestic or international terrorist-related activity;
- (4) To coordinate, as appropriate, with elements of the intelligence community, and with federal, State and local agencies, departments and offices, as well as the private sector;
- (5) To serve as a central repository and custodian of law enforcement records, intelligence information and any other pertinent

information relating to terrorism;

(6) To disseminate, as appropriate, law enforcement information, intelligence information, and any other pertinent information relating to terrorism;

(7) To consult with State, county and municipal entities, and private sector entities, to ensure appropriate exchanges of information;

(8) To consult with appropriate federal, State and local law enforcement agencies and the intelligence community to establish collection requirements for information relating to threats of terrorism;

(9) To identify and develop a comprehensive inventory of critical infrastructure and key assets in the State, maintain a current and secure database of the infrastructure, recommend measures necessary to protect the key resources and critical infrastructures;

(10) To develop, coordinate and conduct training, and to provide other support to enhance State intelligence capabilities;

(11) To review all State legislation regarding counter-terrorism and report to the Attorney General and the Governor regarding such legislation; and

(12) To seek out and monitor federal and State grant programs regarding counter-terrorism.

In order to fund the organization and activities of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the bill would create a dedicated, non-lapsing fund to be known as the "Counter-Terrorism Fund." The director would administer any money appropriated by the Legislature to the fund.